Crematorium accused of burning bodies in ceramics kilns faces suit

Associated Press

SAN BERNARDINO — A lawsuit has been filed against the operators of a crematorium who are accused of burning bodies en masse at a ceramics factory.

The suit, filed Friday in San Bernardino County Superior Court, alleges the defendants engaged in fraud, conducted multiple cremations, mixed ashes from different corpses and took clothes and dental gold.

Filed by San Francisco attorney Melvin Belli on behalf of six people whose relatives were cremated by the firms, the suit seeks unspecified damages for emotional suffering allegedly inflicted by the defendants. It also seeks class-action status.

Named as defendants are Lamb Funeral Home in Pasadena, Pasadena Crematorium in Altadena and Oscar Ceramics in Hesperia. David Sconce, 30, his father, Jerry Sconce, 53, and their Coastal International Eye and Tissue Bank and Coastal Cremations Inc. companies also are named. Both companies are associated with the family-funeral business.

The state Cemetery Board and San Bernardino County officials are investigating allegations that bodies were burned in kilns at Oscar Ceramics after Pasadena Crematorium stopped operating in November because of fire damage.

When Hesperia fire officials shut down the plant on Jan. 20, they reported finding the remains of 25 to 30 bodies in the kilns.

Sconce's attorney, Ralph Cipriano, was unavailable for comment Saturday, but previously has said Sconce believed the license for Pasadena Crematorium also could cover operations at the ceramics factory.

The suit also names the Neptune Society of Costa Mesa and Dicky Mortuary of Fontana, both of which sent bodies to Pasadena Crematorium.

The Sconces and two employees were arrested by San Bernardino County authorities for investigation of allegations that they took dental gold from corpses without permission. But no formal charges have been filed, and they are free on bail.

NewspaperArchive by Storied

Santa Ana Orange County Register, February 08, 1987 Pg. 30, Santa Ana, California, US
https://newspaperarchive.com/santa-ana-orange-county-register-feb-08-1987-p-30/

lawsuit